

EU SMART AND SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY STRATEGY

SEA Europe welcomes this strategy as a good basis for future EU policies

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SEA Europe welcomes the European Commission's Smart and Sustainable Mobility Strategy, published on 9 December. This new strategy covers all modes of transport, including waterborne transport. But, for the first time, it also covers relevant points from the perspective of Europe's shipyards and maritime equipment industry (known as "maritime technology sector").

The mobility strategy focuses on policies to make waterborne transport a sustainable and smart mode of transport. These policies are in line with the ambitions from the European Green Deal and take into account the opportunities offered by a digitalization, automation and autonomy in shipping, inland navigation, ports and the logistics' chain.

The new mobility strategy also has proposals aiming at making waterborne transport more resilient in the aftermath of the Covid-19 crisis and pays attention to the challenges of the waterborne transport sector, including maritime technology, in terms of sectoral skills and competitiveness.

From the perspective of Europe's maritime technology sector, the new strategy contains a number of helpful proposals, such as:

- An explicit reference to the contribution from the 'Zero-Emission Waterborne Transport' Partnership, adopted under Horizon Europe, in terms of acceleration of research and innovation in green technologies and sustainable fuels.
- A reference to use the revenues from the EU Emission Trading Scheme, following its extension to waterborne transport, for investments in European research and innovation so as to decrease further emissions.
- A proposal to finance the modernisation of fleets, including with retrofitting and fleet renewal schemes, also in waterborne transport, and the recognition that such support "*will help to preserve a thriving manufacturing ecosystem in areas where Europe has a strategic technological advantage such as the vessel manufacturing industries*".
- The acknowledgement that waterborne transport equipment and solutions are the engine of European exports and that a sustainable and smart transformation of the sector is an opportunity for Europe's manufacturing industry to lead globally.

"I am very pleased to note that this new European Commission Mobility Strategy has also recognized some important challenges faced by Europe's maritime technology sector", said Christophe Tytgat, SEA Europe's Secretary General. *"It goes without saying that Europe's shipyards and maritime equipment manufacturers are strategic for Europe to realize numerous EU policies, including the European Green Deal and Digitalization Agenda. But also the acknowledgement that finance can be used to modernize fleets, inter alia through a fleet renewal scheme, is very much welcomed",* Mr. Tytgat concluded.

Background Note:

SEA Europe represents close to 100% of the European shipbuilding industry in 16 nations, encompassing the production, maintenance, repair and conversion of all types of ships and floating structures, commercial as well as naval, including the full supply chain with the various producers of maritime systems, equipment material, and services.

For further information please visit www.seaeurope.eu

or contact: Christophe Tytgat, Secretary General ct@seaeurope.eu Tel: +32 (0)2.230.32.87